

# Kansas Association of Legal Assistants

an affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

## Membership Application

Completed Application form with payment should be mailed to:

KALA Association of Legal Assistants

P.O. Box 47031

Wichita, KS 67201

First Year's dues and initiation fee must accompany application form. Thereafter, dues are billed annually and are due on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications received after January 1 will be prorated at ½ the annual fee.

### **Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.**

(adopted by Kansas Association of Legal Assistants)

A legal assistant must adhere strictly to the accepted standards of legal ethics and to the general principles of proper conduct. The performance of the duties of the legal assistant shall be governed by specific canons as defined herein so that justice will be served and goals of the profession attained. (See NALA Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Section II.)

The canons of ethics set forth hereafter are adopted by the NALA, Inc., as general guide intended to aid legal assistants and attorneys. The enumeration of these rules does not mean there are not others of equal importance although not specifically mentioned. Court rules, agency rules, and statutes must be taken into consideration when interpreting the canons.

Definition: Legal assistants, also known as paralegals, are a distinguishable group of persons who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training, and experience, legal assistants have knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law which qualify them to do work of a legal nature under the supervision of an attorney.

In 2001, NALA members also adopted the ABA definition of a paralegal, as follows: A paralegal is a person qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible. (Adopted by the ABA in 1997)

**Canon 1 --** A legal assistant must not perform any of the duties that attorneys only may perform nor take any actions that attorneys may not take.

**Canon 2 --** A legal assistant may perform any task which is properly delegated and supervised by an attorney, as long as the attorney is ultimately responsible to the client, maintains a direct relationship with the client, and assumes professional responsibility for the work product. (See NALA Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Sections IV and VII.)

**Canon 3 --** A legal assistant must not (See NALA Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Section VI):

- a. engage in, encourage, or contribute to any act which could constitute the unauthorized practice of law; and
- b. establish attorney-client relationships, set fees, give legal opinions or advice or represent a client before a court or agency unless so authorized by that court or agency; and
- c. engage in conduct or take any action which would assist or involve the attorney in a violation of professional ethics or give the appearance of professional impropriety.

**Canon 4 --** A legal assistant must use discretion and professional judgment commensurate with knowledge and experience but must not render independent legal judgment in place of an attorney. The services of an attorney are essential in the public interest whenever such legal judgment is required. (See NALA Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Section VII.)

**Canon 5 --** A legal assistant must disclose his or her status as a legal assistant at the outset of any professional relationship with a client, attorney, a court or administrative agency or personnel thereof, or a member of the general public. A legal assistant must act prudently in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of an attorney. (See NALA Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Section V.)

**Canon 6 --** A legal assistant must strive to maintain integrity and a high degree of competency through education and training with respect to professional responsibility, local rules and practice, and through continuing education in substantive areas of law to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide legal service.

**Canon 7 --** A legal assistant must protect the confidences of a client must not violate any rule or statute now in effect or hereafter enacted controlling the doctrine of privileged communications between a client and an attorney. (See Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Section V.)

**Canon 8 --** A legal assistant must do all other things incidental, necessary, or expedient for the attainment of the ethics and responsibilities as defined by statute or rule of court.

**Canon 9 --** A legal assistant's conduct is guided by bar associations' codes of professional responsibility and rules of professional conduct.

## Voting Membership (\$50.00 + \$5.00 Initiation Fee)

Any person, who qualifies as set forth below at the time of initial application for membership, may become a Voting Member upon payment of the annual dues prescribed therefor and approval by the Membership Committee:

1. Any person who has successfully completed the Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) examination of NALA.
2. Any person who has graduated from an ABA approved program of study for legal assistants, who is currently employed as a legal assistant.
3. Any person who has graduated from a course of study for legal assistants which is institutionally accredited but not ABA approved, and which requires not less than the equivalent of sixty (60) semester hours of classroom study, who is currently employed as a legal assistant.
4. Any person who has graduated from a course of study for legal assistants other than those set forth in 2 and 3 above, plus not less than six (6) months of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant.
5. Any person who has received a baccalaureate degree in any field, plus not less than six (6) months of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant.
6. Any person who has a minimum of three (3) years of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney, including at least six (6) months of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant.
7. Any person who has a minimum of two (2) years of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant.

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**Full Name (with credentials):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total years legal experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Paralegal      ☐ Legal Assistant

**NALA Member:** ☐ Yes    ☐ No

**Certified:** ☐ Yes    ☐ No    **Certification:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Certified:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Check the most appropriate description of your employer:**

☐ Private law office    ☐ Corporate law office    ☐ Government    ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred mailing address:** ☐ Work    ☐ Home

**Preferred email address:** ☐ Work    ☐ Home

### Work Information

### Home Information

**Company:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Required information for all applicants qualifying under section 4 or 5 above.**

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Qualifying Section: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required information for all applicants qualifying under section 4, 5, 6 or 7 above.**

**Attorney/Employer Attestation**

I hereby attest that the above-referenced applicant for voting membership in KALA is employed by me and meets the qualifications for voting membership in KALA as listed under section \_\_\_\_\_ above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of attorney/employer (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of attorney/employer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Required information for all voting membership applicants.**

How long have you been employed as a paralegal? \_\_\_\_\_ Total years of legal experience: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for Voting Membership and agree to be bound by the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility (adopted by Kansas Association of Legal Assistants), and any other code adopted by the membership of KALA, and the by-laws of KALA. I further understand that this application is subject to approval by KALA.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date